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Soviet Cautions NBC on Pope

MOSCOW, Feb. 16 (AP) — The Soviet Foreign Ministry has warned NBC News to stop broadcasting allegations about Bulgarian and Soviet involvement in the shooting of Pope John Paul II, the network's Moscow bureau said today.

Gene Randall, the NBC News correspondent here, said the warning was read to him Tuesday during a telephone call from the Foreign Ministry.

He quoted the Soviet statement as having said:

"Contrary to the facts and ignoring the appropriate statements of the Soviet side, NBC has again broadcast an hourlong slanderous program concerning the alleged 'involvement' of Bulgaria and the Soviet Union in the attempt on the Pope's life.

"We consider it necessary to make the most serious warning that, in case NBC continues to act as a loudspeaker for spreading anti-Soviet insinuations, disinformation and slander, it cannot

but affect the contacts of the company and its bureau in Moscow with the appropriate Soviet organizations."

The warning came in response to an NBC News "update" on Jan. 25 of an hourlong documentary it first aired in September suggesting that the K.G.B., the Soviet intelligence service, had previous knowledge of the assassination attempt. The update also suggested links between the K.G.B. and a purported plot to kill Lech Walesa when the Polish labor leader was visiting the Pope in Italy.

Mr. Randall said he had been told by the Foreign Ministry that the Soviet statement was the official reaction to a specific program and a "warning for the future." Soviet officials did not specify what action they would take if the allegation was repeated, he said.

NBC News Voices Confidence

NBC News issued a statement yesterday in New York saying that it was confident in the accuracy of its reporting.

In the statement, Reuven Frank, president of NBC News, said, "We stand by our story," and he added: "We are confident of our sources. It was a responsible piece of journalism."